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SPEECH

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MOTIONS,

MADE

IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

On Monday, the 27th of March, 1775.

TOGETHER WITH

A Draught of a LETTER of REQUISITION

To the COLONIES.

By DAVID HARTLEY, Esq.

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A SPEECH, &c.

I FIND myſelf under the neceſſity of making ſome apology to the Houſe, for the trouble which I am going to give them this day; and to aſſure them, that it is with the greateſt deference that I preſume to obtrude any ſentiments of mine, upon the important ſubject of America. Though I have ſo lately had the honour of a ſeat in this Houſe, yet I have for many years turned my thoughts and attention to matters of public concern and national policy. This queſtion of America, is now of many years ſtanding; of the greateſt public notoriety, as to the facts upon which it turns; and every opinion has been ſo fully debated over and over, that any man who has given his mind to public buſineſs, may be ſuppoſed equally informed out of the Houſe as in it.

When I threw out the propoſitions caſually before Chriſtmas, which I ſhall offer more formally to you to-day, my view was in no ſort hoſtile to the adminiſtration. I ſaw the difficulty that we were got into by our own precipitancy; that unhappy dilemma, which offered nothing but ruin in going forward, or diſgrace in the retreat. I was in hopes, from ſome phraſes dropt by the noble lord at the head of the treaſury, in the beginning of the ſeſſion, of others being more ſanguine and more impatient than himſelf; that he at leaſt would have ſhewn ſome diſpoſition to relent: and I ſtill believe, if he were at liberty to follow his own inclination and judgment, that it would be ſo. I am the more warranted in thinking ſo, from the propoſition which the noble lord himſelf offered to the Houſe ſome time ago. There was in that propoſition, a ſhew of conciliation to captivate one ſide of the Houſe, and ſufficient to betray what were his own wiſhes; but on the other ſide there was the reality of every unrelenting and vindictive

meaſure annexed, to prove, that there ſtill were others more ſanguine and more impatient than himſelf; over whom, with all his abilities, with all his eloquence, with all the advantages of his ſituation, he could not maintain his aſcendant. Whatever ſtruggles the noble lord may have had with himſelf or his friends, they are all at an end; the die is caſt for war with America. It was found, that any conciliatory propoſition muſt have been in ſome degree a conceſſion, which none of his unrelenting friends would conſent to.

However, by the noble lord's propoſition, there is one conceſſion made to America, under the authority of this Houſe, which cannot be recalled; and which finally and concluſively condemns the conduct of every adminiſtration for theſe ten years paſt, one excepted; I mean the repeal of the ſtamp-act. If it can be proper *now* to offer to the colonies to pay upon requiſition, what can this nation ſay for having kept out of the only right road for *ten years?* How can we cenſure the colonies for any errors committed by them, which were the conſequences of our own beginning at the wrong end? Tho' a threat is now annexed to the noble lord's requiſition, yet if, at firſt, we had begun with a requiſition inſtead of taxing, it would have been more juſt and prudent. There could be no juſtice or prudence in threatening a people who had always contributed moſt freely; who never would have called our ſuppoſed right in queſtion, but for our miſapplication of it. Therefore, Sir, when I have brought back the noble lord's compulſory requiſition, to my free requiſition, it ſtands confeſſed, upon the very nature of his propoſition itſelf, that I have ſet it upon its own true original ground.

There is another objection to the noble lord's plan, which, as I have mentioned it upon a former occaſion, I ſhall only remind you of in a few words: I mean a breach of faith with the colonies. A ſecretary of ſtates writes, in 1769, a circular letter to the colonies, to aſſure them, That you will never raiſe a revenue by taxing. A few years after, upon a negociation with the Eaſt India Company, the three-penny tea-tax becomes not merely a quit-rent for the point of honour, but riſes to an actual revenue. Then you plead, that you did not break your word, as the revenue ariſing was not in your original intentions, but only caſual, from a regulation of trade. But what can you ſay now? The noble lord boaſts, that he has put the queſtion upon the true ground, a demand for a ſubſtantial revenue; a demand, attended with threats of compulſion. What is this leſs than raiſing a revenue by a tax?

But

But in any caſe, let the noble lord think what he will of his propoſition; why has he not, in ſo many weeks, given it ſome practicable ſhape? Why has he not offered ſome act of Parliament to give it effect? However, as he has omitted that, I ſhall take the propoſition without its objectionable parts, and propoſe an addreſs to the King to give it force; in which motion, I hope to meet with the ſupport of thoſe gentlemen who gave it countenance originally, when it came from the noble lord. I ſhall give the whole ſubſtance of the propoſition; only leaving out in the addreſs to the King, any threats of the compulſion, which you meditate in reſerve. If you think that you have the right of taxing, I paſs it over in ſilence,—if you have the power, I do not—I cannot, take that away. Then make a free requiſition; and be contented to keep to yourſelves the ſatisfaction of thinking, that you have ſomething in reſerve, in caſe of non-compliance. Keep that *ſub ſilentio*; at leaſt till you find that it becomes neceſſary. I am not an advocate either for the right or the expediency of taxing the Americans, but the contrary. However as far as we go the ſame road of requiſitions, let us go together.

As what I have to offer, will be founded upon requiſitions to the colonies, I will endeavour to anſwer an objection before hand, which I have heard in this Houſe. It is to the plan of *royal* requiſitions. This objection to the interference of the royal name, comes from a ſide of the Houſe, from which one ſhould leaſt have expected it. However if this be an objection, mine are not *royal* requiſitions. My motion originates from the Houſe of Commons, to deſire the King, as the executive magiſtrate, to put *their* plan into effect. If the power of making requiſitions to the colonies, is not in the King; my motion is to give the authority and ſanction of Parliament to this meaſure. It is ſo far from being my propoſition, to enable the crown to raiſe what ſupply it can from America, independent of Parliament; that my motion is the very firſt which has ever had in contemplation, to lay a parliamentary controul upon that power; and to require that all anſwers from America ſhall be laid before this Houſe for the very purpoſe of controuling that power in the crown. I have ſo doubly guarded that point, that my motion is not even for the crown to demand a ſupply from America; but for ſervices to be performed in America; for the defence, ſecurity and protection of the colonies themſelves.

I would wiſh to ſtate to the Houſe the merits of this queſtion, of requiſitions to the colonies; and to ſee upon what principles it is founded; to reviſe and ſettle the accounts between Great Britain and her colonies; and then, upon a foundation of diſtributive juſtice, to come to ſome ſettlement. We hear of nothing now, but the protection which we have given to them; of the immenſe expence incurred on their account.—We are told that they have done nothing for themſelves; that they pay no taxes; in ſhort, every thing is aſſerted about America to ſerve the preſent turn, without the leaſt regard to truth.—I would have theſe matters fairly ſifted out.

To begin with the late war. The Americans turned the ſucceſs of the war, at both ends of the line. General Monkton took Beauſejour in Nova Scotia with 1500 provincial troops and about 200 regulars. Sir William Johnſon in the other part of America, changed the face of the war to ſucceſs, with a provincial army, which took Baron Dieſkau priſoner. But, Sir, the glories of the war, under the united Britiſh and American arms, are recent in every one's memory. Suffice it to decide this queſtion; that the Americans bore, even in our judgment, more than their full proportion; that this Houſe did annually vote them an acknowledgement of their zeal and ſtrenuous efforts, and a compenſation for the exceſs of their zeal and expences, above their due proportion. They kept, one year with another, 25000 men on foot, and loſt in the war the flower of their youth. How ſtrange muſt it appear to them to hear of nothing down to the year 1763, (March 14, 1763) but encomiums upon their *active zeal and ſtrenuous efforts*, and then, no longer after than the year 1764, in ſuch a trice of time, to ſee the tide turn, and from that hour to this, to hear it aſſerted that they were a burden upon the common cauſe; aſſerted even in that ſame parliament, which had voted them compenſations for the liberality and exceſs of their ſervices.

Nor did they ſtint their ſervices to North America: they followed the Britiſh Arms out of their continent, to the Havannah and Martinique, after the compleat conqueſt of America. And ſo they had done in the preceding war. They were not grudging of their exertions,—they were at the ſiege of Carthagena—yet what was Carthagena to them, but as members of the common cauſe, of the glory of this country!—In that war too, Sir, they took Louisbourg from the French, ſingle-handed, without any

European

European aſſiſtance; as mettled an enterprize as any in our hiſtory! an everlaſting memorial of the zeal, courage and perſeverance of the troops of New England. The men themſelves dragged the cannon over a moraſs which had always been thought impaſſable, where neither horſes nor oxen could go, and they carried the ſhot upon their backs. And what was their reward for this forward and ſpirited enterprize? for the reduction of this American Dunkirk? Their reward, Sir, you know very well: it was given up for a barrier to the Dutch. The only conqueſt in that war which you had to give up, which would have been an effectual barrier to them againſt the French power in America, though conquered by themſelves, was ſurrendered for a foreign barrier. As a ſubſtitute for this, you ſettle Halifax for a *place d'armes*, leaving the limits of the province of Nova Scotia as a matter of conteſt with the French, which could not fail to prove, as it did, the cauſe of another war. Had you kept Louiſbourg inſtead of ſettling Halifax, the Americans may ſay, at leaſt, that there would not have been that pretext for imputing the late war to their account. It has been their forwardneſs in your cauſe, that made them the objects of the French reſentment. In the war of 1744, at your requiſition, they were the aggreſſors with the French in America. We know the orders given to Monſ. D'Anville, to deſtroy and lay all their ſea-port towns in aſhes; and we know the cauſe of that reſentment; it was to revenge their conqueſt of Louiſbourg.

Whenever Great Britain has declared war, they have taken their part. They were engaged in King William's wars and Queen Ann's, even in their infancy. They conquered Acadia in the laſt century, for us; and we then gave it up. Again, in Queen Ann's war they conquered Nova Scotia, which, from that time, has always belonged to Great Britain. They have been engaged in more than one expedition to Canada, ever foremoſt to partake of honour and danger with the mother country.

Well, Sir, what have we done for them? Have we conquered the country for them from the Indians? Have we cleared it? Have we drained it? Have we made it habitable? What have we done for them? I believe preciſely nothing at all, but juſt keeping watch and ward over their trade, that they ſhould receive nothing but from ourſelves, and at our own price. I will not poſitively ſay, that we have ſpent nothing; though I don't recollect any ſuch article upon our journals; but I mean, not any material expence in ſetting

them out as coloniſts. The royal military government of Nova Scotia coſt, indeed, not a little ſum; above 500,000l. for its plantation, and its firſt years. Had your other colonies coſt any thing ſimilar, either in their out-ſet or ſupport, there would have have been ſomething to ſay on that ſide; but inſtead of that, they have been left to themſelvs for 100, or 150 years, upon the fortune and capital of private adventurers, to encounter every difficulty and danger. What towns have we built for them? What deſerts have we cleared? What country have we conquered for them from the Indians? Name the officers—name the troops—the expeditions—their dates. Where are they to be found? Not in the journals of this kingdom. They are no where to be found.

In all the wars which have been common to us and them, they have taken their full ſhare. But in all their own dangers, in all the difficulties belonging ſeparately to their ſituation, in all the Indian wars which did not immediately concern us, we left them to themſelves to ſtruggle their way through. For the whim of a miniſter, you can beſtow half a million to build a town, and to plant a royal colony of Nova Scotia; a greater ſum than you have beſtowed upon every other colony together, ſince their foundation.

And notwithſtanding all theſe, which are the real facts, now that they have ſtruggled through their difficulties, and begin to hold up their heads, and to ſhew that empire which promiſes to be the foremoſt in the world, we claim them and theirs, as implicitly belonging to us, without any conſideration of their own rights. We charge them with ingratitude, without the leaſt regard to truth, juſt as if this kingdom had for a century and a half, attended to no other object; as if all our revenue, all our power, all our thought, had been beſtowed upon them, and all our national debt had been contracted in the Indian wars of America, totally forgetting the ſubordination in commerce and manufactures, in which we have bound them; and for which, at leaſt, we owe them help towards their protection.

Look at the preamble of the act of navigation, and every American act, and ſee if the intereſt of this country is not the avowed object. If they make a hat or a piece of ſteel, an act of parliament calls it a nuiſance: a tilting hammer, a ſteel furnace, muſt be abated in America as a nuiſance. Is it ſo with their fellow ſubjects on this ſide of the Atlantic? Are the hats and cloths of Glouceſterſhire nuiſances? Are the tilting hammers of Pontipool nuiſances? Are the cutleries of Sheffield and Birmingham nuiſances? Are the ſtockings

of

of Nottingham nuiſances? Are the linens of Scotland, Ireland, or Broomſgrove nuiſances? Are the woollen cloths of Yorkſhire, the crapes of Norwich, or the cottons of Mancheſter, nuiſances? Sir, I ſpeak from facts. I call your books of ſtatutes and journals to witneſs. With the leaſt recollection, every one muſt acknowledge the truth of theſe facts.

But it is ſaid, the peace eſtabliſhment of North America has been, and is, very expenſive to this country. Sir, for what has been let us take the peace eſtabliſhment before 1739, and after 1748. All that I can find in your journals is, four companies kept up at New York, and three companies in Carolina. As to the four companies at New York, this country ſhould know beſt why they put themſelves to that expence; or whether they were really at any expence at all; for theſe were companies of fictitious men. Unleſs the money was repaid into the treaſury, it was applied to ſome other purpoſe; for theſe companies were not a quarter full. In the year 1754, two of them were ſent up to Albany, to attend commiſſioners to treat with the ſix nations, to impreſs them with a high idea of our military power; to diſplay all the pomp and circumſtance of war before them, in hopes to ſcare them; when, in truth, we made a very ridiculous figure. The whole complement of the two companies did not exceed thirty tattered, tottering invalids, fitter to ſcare the crows. This information I have had from eye-witneſſes.

It has not fallen in my way to hear any account of the three Carolina companies; theſe are trifles. The ſubſtantial queſtion is, What material expence have you been at in the periods alluded to, for the peace eſtabliſhment of North America? Ranſack your journals, ſearch your public offices for army or ordnance expences. Make out your bill, and let us ſee what it is. No one yet knows it. Had there been any ſuch, I believe the adminiſtration would have produced it before now, with aggravation; as was the caſe a few years ago with the Eaſt India company, who had their effects arreſted for a long bill, when they little expected it, and that bill too not very ſcrupulouſly charged: but when money is in the caſe, whether from the eaſt or from the weſt, miniſters can make as long bills as other people.

But is not the peace eſtabliſhment of North Ameria now very high, and very expenſive? I would anſwer that by another queſtion; Why ſhould the peace eſtabliſhment ſince the late war, and the total expulſion of the French intereſt, be higher than it was before the late war, and when the French

poſſeſſed above half the American continent? If it be ſo, there muſt be ſome ſingular reaſon.

I cannot ſuppoſe that you mean, under the general term of North America, to ſaddle all the expences of Canada, Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, Newfoundland, Florida, and the Weſt Indies, upon the old colonies of North America. You cannot mean to keep the ſovereignty, the property, the poſſeſſion (theſe are the terms of the ceſſion in the treaty of 1763) to yourſelves, and lay the expence of the military eſtabliſhment, which you think proper to keep up, upon the old colonies.

Sir, the colonies never thought of interfering in the prerogative of making war or peace; but if this nation can be ſo unjuſt as to meditate the ſettling the expence of your new conqueſts ſeparately upon them, they ought to have had a voice in ſettling the terms of peace. It is you, on this ſide of the water, who have firſt brought out the idea of ſeparate intereſts, by planning ſeparate and diſtinct charges. It was *their* men, and *their* money, which had conquered North America and the Weſt Indies, as well as yours, though you ſeized all the ſpoils; but they never thought of dictating to you what you ſhould keep, or what you ſhould give up, little dreaming that you reſerved the expence of your military governments for them. Who gave up the Havannah? Who gave up Martinique? Who gave up Guadaloupe, with Mariegalante? Who gave up Santa Lucia? Who gave up the Newfoundland fiſhery? Who gave up all theſe, without *their* conſent, without *their* participation, without *their* conſultation, and after all without equivalents? Sir, if your colonies had but been permitted to have gathered up the crumbs which have fallen from your table, they would gladly have ſupported the whole eſtabliſhment of North America.

Your colonies have now ſhewn you the value of lands in North America; and therefore you have veſted in the crown the ſovereignty, property, and poſſeſſion of infinite tracts of land, perhaps as extenſive as all Europe, which the crown may diſpoſe of at its own price, as the land riſes in America, and grants become invaluable; and to enable the crown to ſupport an arbitrary military, nay even a Romiſh government, till theſe lands riſe to their future immenſe value, you are caſting about to ſaddle the expence either upon the American or the Britiſh ſupplies. The Americans muſt, indeed, be in a ſtate of inſanity, if they do not ſee the tendency of all this; and we ourſelves muſt be more inſane and blind even than the Americans: we, who have already ſeen the patronage of the Eaſt Indies put into the hands of the

crown,

crown, and who now ſee the ſovereignty, property, and poſſeſſion of North America, with every military and deſpotic power, veſted ſolely in the King's hands; we, who are made to learn every hour, by precept and example, that charters, being but the breath of kings, are to be annihilated by the breath of pliable parliaments; we muſt be, Sir, I ſay, more inſane than them, if we do not ſee the tendency of all this, and if we do not provide in time for our own ſecurity, as well as for that of America. I will not ſuppoſe, that we can be ſo improvident as not to attend to theſe important and perhaps not very diſtant events; nor, with reſpect to the preſent queſtion, will, I ſuppoſe, that Parliament can meditate ſo great an injuſtice, as to require your old colonies to ſupport the charge of all your new conqueſts, and of all the reſt of America.

This country is very liberal in its boaſting of its protection and parental kindneſs to America. Is it for that purpoſe that we have converted the province of Canada into an abſolute and military government, and have eſtabliſhed the Romiſh bigotry dominant, as a terror upon all our ancient and proteſtant colonies? What ſecurity, what protection do they derive? In what ſort are they the better for the conqueſt of the French dominions, if we take that opportunity to eſtabliſh a government, civil, military, and eccleſiaſtical, in the utmoſt degree hoſtile to the government of our own provinces, and with the intent to ſet a thorn in their ſides? Is this affection and parental kindneſs? Surely you do not expect that they ſhould be taxed and talliaged to pay for this rod of iron which you are preparing for them!

Now, Sir, I come to a point, in which I think you may be ſaid to have given ſome protection. I mean the protection of your fleet to the American commerce. And even here I am at a loſs by what terms to call it; whether you are protecting yourſelves or them. They are *your* cargoes, *your* manufactures, *your* commerce, *your* navigation. Every ſhip from America is bound to Great Britain. None enter an American port, but Britiſh ſhips and men. While you are defending the American commerce, you are defending Leeds and Halifax, Sheffield and Birmingham, Mancheſter and Hull, Briſtol and Liverpool, London, Dublin and Glaſgow. However, as our fleet does protect whatever commerce belongs to them, let that be ſet to the account. It is an argument to them, as well as to us. As it has been the ſole policy of this kingdom, for ages, by the operation of every commercial act of Parliament, to make the American commerce totally ſubſervient to our own convenience,

venience, the leaſt that we owe to them in return is protection.

Sir, I have now ſtated my ſentiments upon the preliminary matters. I have endeavoured to ſtate the ſervices, in war, of the Americans, with ours, and their mutual proportions; in which, by our own confeſſion, the Americans have taken more than their ſhare. I have ſtated the expence of your military eſtabliſhment for them, ſuch as it has been, or ſuch as it need to be, always proteſting againſt the impoſition of the charge of the conquered provinces upon them; and I have ſtated the neceſſity and convenience of your fleet to their commerce. Let this line of dividing the queſtion, be purſued to what minuteneſs you will, in order that we may come to a fundamental judgment; let debtor or creditor fall on which ſide it will, I have no bias to either ſide of the argument; but to have perfect and liberal juſtice done, and reconcilement, if poſſible effected, upon ſound and equitable principles. I will beg leave to read to the Houſe a draught of a letter of requiſition, which I have drawn up after the manner of former requiſitions to the colonies, and which I have endeavoured to adapt to the preſent circumſtances.

Here he read the following draught * of a letter of requiſition to the colonies.

" His Majeſty having nothing ſo much at heart, as to ſee every part of his dominions put into a ſtate of ſecurity, both by ſea and land, againſt any attack, or even apprehenſion of attack, from foreign powers, has therefore particularly taken into his conſideration, the neceſſity of keeping up a reſpectable marine eſtabliſhment; as well for the actual protection of the commercial intereſts of Great Britain and America; as to maintain undiminiſhed the power and pre-

eminence

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* This draught is made out, according to the uſual and official forms, and upon the model of former letters of requiſition to the colonies. Whenever it has been thought proper to require aids from the colonies, it has been the invariable cuſtom for the ſecretary of ſtate to write a circular letter to the governors of the ſeveral provinces, ſtating the occaſion of the demand, the circumſtances of the caſe, and the neceſſity, importance, or expediency of the ſervices required, with directions to lay the ſame before the reſpective *aſſemblies*, " to uſe his influence with them, and to recommend it to them, to take theſe matters into their conſideration, and to comply with ſuch reaſonable requiſitions."—*The American colonies have ever complied moſt chearfully and liberally with all ſuch reaſonable and conſtitutional requiſitions.*

eminence of the royal flag of Great Britain, and to preſerve that navy, which has in the time of war, carried us triumphant over all our enemies, from falling into neglect or inaction, in the time of peace. The naval power of Great Britain, is more eſpecially neceſſary, for the protection of his Majeſty's American ſubjects, from the ſpecial nature of their caſe; who have indeed each of them, by their reſpective militias, a provincial ſecurity by land, but from the want of a ſimilar eſtabliſhment at ſea, are particularly unguarded on that element. The coloniſts are dependent upon the ſecurity of the ſea, not only for their own trade, but likewiſe for that ſupply of Britiſh manufactures, which, if they were under the neceſſity of providing for themſelves, would draw them off from thoſe objects of their colonization, which are more beneficial to them, the poſſeſſing, and bringing into culture, the extenſive and fertile lands of America. It is therefore the peaceable purſuit and enjoyment of all and every one of theſe advantages, for which they are beholden to his Majeſty's royal navy, for protection.

"His Majeſty has likewiſe taken into his conſideration, the ſtate of the American Colonies, with reſpect to their military defence by land. The glory of all the American conqueſts in the late war, was accompliſhed by the active zeal, and ſtrenuous efforts, of the Britiſh and American united arms; in the proſecution of which, his Majeſty has repeatedly had experience, that his faithful and loyal ſubjects of America, have contributed more than their proportion. His Majeſty is therefore well pleaſed, that his American ſubjects ſhould reap, upon the fortunate termination of that war, the advantages of ſecurity moſt peculiarly beneficial to their ſituation. He conſiders this ſecurity, as no more than a juſt and adequate recompence, for the liberality, zeal, and courage of their exertions, in the conqueſt of all thoſe hoſtile provinces, and in the extirpation of all thoſe foreign European intereſts, which had for many years been hovering, with an evil aſpect, over the Britiſh American colonies, and circumſcribing their early growth.

"His Majeſty conſiders, that the eſtabliſhment and confirmation of his newly-acquired dominions, for the peace, ſafety, and tranquility of his ancient and loyal colonies, requires the ſame union of mind and meaſures, between all his ſubjects on each ſide of the Atlantic Ocean, by which they were acquired; and that ſuitable and proportionate proviſions ſhould be made, by the reſpective parts of his Ma-

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jeſty's dominion, according to the intereſt or advantages to each reſpectively reſulting; the ſovereignty, property and poſſeſſion of the ſaid conquered dominions, being ceded to Great Britain, on the one ſide; and a permanent and peaceable ſecurity, from all foreign enemies, or foreign forces, being the beneficial advantage acquired, and from the time of their conqueſt enjoyed, by the American colonies on the other. His Majeſty therefore, on this ſubject conſiders, that in reaſon, by much the greater part of the expences of the eſtabliſhment of the conquered provinces, ſhould fall where the ſovereignty, property and poſſeſſion are veſted.

"With reſpect to the military defence of his Majeſty's ancient colonies, the ſame plan may be adopted, which has obtained in former times of peace, as no greater ſtanding force need be added to the militias of each province, than was found neceſſary, before the expulſion of all foreign intereſts from North America. Upon conſideration of each of theſe branches requiring ſome military eſtabliſhment, his Majeſty thinks it neceſſary, with the conſent of parliament, to keep up ſome ſtanding forces in America; as well for the ſecurity of his newly acquired dominions, as to be in readineſs, in caſe any of his ancient colonies ſhould be attacked, to act in conjunction with the militia of any ſuch colony, for the required defence. His Majeſty therefore, upon conſideration of the premiſes, both with reſpect to the neceſſary naval and military eſtabliſhments, thinks it not unreaſonable, to order requiſitions to be made, to the ſeveral aſſemblies of his loyal colonies in North America, for a ſuitable and voluntary proviſion, for the purpoſes of defending, protecting, and ſecuring the ſaid colonies.

"And to make the execution of this matter as convenient, and as ſatisfactory as poſſible, to his ſubjects in America, his Majeſty recommends the mode to the option of the colonies; as it will be equally ſatisfactory to him, if the colonies themſelves will undertake the performance of the ſervices, under his Majeſty's orders, by equipping, arming, and maintaining, a ſuitable number of veſſels, with the proper complement of men, to be under the command of ſuch naval officers, as his Majeſty ſhall from time to time, appoint; and in like manner to levy, cloath, pay and provide for, ſuch proportion of forces upon the military eſtabliſhment of America as ſhall be equitable upon the circumſtances of the caſe, and upon conſideration of the reſpective abilities of each province; ſuch forces to act either ſeparately, or in conjunction with any other of his Majeſty's forces, and to

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be under the ſupreme command of all ſuch officers, as his Majeſty ſhall think proper to appoint. His Majeſty will order an account to be laid before the ſeveral aſſemblies, of the naval and military eſtabliſhments, which his Majeſty hereby requires them to furniſh.

"His Majeſty is not unmindful, of the many reſtraints and prohibitions which the colonies are under, in reſpect to their commerce and manufactures; and that many of the regulations eſtabliſhed by the authority of the Britiſh parliament, operate to the ſame effect (though indirectly) as taxes. This is the accepted condition of their emigration, to continue ſubordinate to the Britiſh commerce, and inſtrumental to the ſupport and extenſion of Britiſh manufactures, while they are left at liberty themſelves, to ſpread into the continent of North America. But as many of theſe regulations and reſtraints were formed in old times, when the principles of commerce were perhaps ill underſtood, and as it may be found that many of them are nugatory, or vexatious to the American colonies, without being beneficial to Great Britain; his Majeſty hopes, that an amicable compliance with the above-mentioned reaſonable requiſitions, and an oſtenſible contribution on the part of the colonies, to the general parliamentary ſupply, will pave the way for many relaxations in the articles of commerce. And his Majeſty gives the ſtrongeſt aſſurances to his coloniſts, that he will, at all times, recommend to his Paaliament, to reviſe, repeal, explain, amend and relax, all ſuch reſtraints and prohibitions, as ſhall appear to be frivolous, unjuſt, impolitic and oppreſſive to the colonies.

"It is with great grief that his Majeſty, who is the common father of his people, and views with an equal eye of affection, his ſubjects in every part of his dominions, has of late years obſerved the very unhappy diviſions, which have ſubſiſted between his Britiſh Parliament, and the aſſemblies of his American ſubjects; and that needleſs and imprudent diſcuſſions of ſpeculative points, from mutual miſapprehenſions, have been converted into anger and animoſities, which threaten the moſt fatal conſequences. His Majeſty is too well acquainted with the natural juſtice and moderation of his Britiſh Parliament, to believe that they could ever entertain the thought, of any known or intended injuſtice or grievance, to their fellow ſubjects in America; and from the many recent and repeated proofs of obedience, loyalty and affection, from the coloniſts, and of their liberality and diſintereſted zeal for the honour of his Majeſty's arms, which they

have

have freely and chearfully followed into diſtant climates, after the complete conqueſt of America; he is equally aſſured that his American ſubjects, are incapable of being influenced by narrow or ſelfiſh motives. His Majeſty has the fulleſt confidence, in the repeated declarations of his American colonies, who have ſeparately and collectively declared, "That they do ſincerely recognize their allegiance to his crown, and all due ſubordination to the Parliament of Great Britain; that they ſhall always retain the moſt grateful ſenſe of the aſſiſtance and protection, which they have received; that their lives and fortunes are entirely devoted to his Majeſty's ſervice, to which, on his royal requiſitions, they have ever been ready to contribute, to the utmoſt of their ability." Therefore his Majeſty has the fulleſt dependence, "That whenever the exigencies of the ſtate may require it, they will, as they have heretofore done, chearfully contribute their full proportion of men and money." His Majeſty entertains the moſt confident hope, from the upright intentions of both parties, that upon a cool re-conſideration of the original matters in diſpute, which his Majeſty has endeavoured to ſtate upon the grounds of reaſon, with fairneſs and impartiality, all unhappy animoſities and civil diſtractions, will be compoſed upon the ſolid foundations of equity and juſtice; and that all things will be reſtored to that happy ſtate of harmony and mutual affection, which ſubſiſted at the termination of the late glorious war; and that every hoſtile and vindictive act or declaration, which has paſſed from the commencement of theſe unfortunate troubles, will be buried in everlaſting oblivion.

"It would be a grievous affliction to his Majeſty, to ſee the courage of his faithful ſubjects, averted to civil diſſentions, and the luſtre of the national arms ſtained with civil blood; to ſee the general peace and tranquility broken, and invitations thereby thrown out to his enemies, to diſturb the glories of his reign; to ſee the unhappy diviſions of this kingdom againſt itſelf, giving courage to their ſecret reſentments, and tempting them, in an evil hour, to reaſſume thoſe hoſtile purpoſes againſt his Majeſty's dominions, which the united and compacted powers of the whole Houſe of Bourbon, were unable, in the late glorious war, to accompliſh, againſt the then united and compacted arms of Great Britain and America. His Majeſty's moſt earneſt and moſt anxious wiſhes are, to ſee unanimity reſtored amongſt all his ſubjects, that they may long enjoy in peace the fruits of thoſe common victories which have heretofore cemented them in one general

cauſe;

cauſe; that living in harmony and brotherly kindneſs one towards another, and in one common obedience to the ſupreme legiſlature, they may join all hands with one heart, to ſupport the dignity of his Crown, the juſt authority of Parliament, the true and combined intereſts of Great Britain and America; and thus tranſmit to poſterity, with everlaſting honour, the united empire of theſe kingdoms."

This is the plan, and the terms, or to the effect, that, according to the beſt of my judgment, a requiſition on the preſent ſubject ſhould be drawn. I have endeavoured to ſtate the caſe in ſuch a manner, as may open a way to reconcilement on both ſides. Make your requiſitions free, and let them be founded in reaſon and juſtice; and there are no ſubjects in any kingdom that will be deaf to reaſon, juſtice, common intereſt, and mutual obligations: and I am ſure, from the repeated liberality and zeal of our colonies, we, of all the kingdoms in the world, have the leaſt reaſon to diſtruſt thoſe of our own conſanguinity.

I cannot think it a poſſible thing in our conſtitution, that any one ſeriouſly, upon a moment's reflection, can admit the thought of denying to the Americans their judgment upon the neceſſity or application of money required. That is the right of all free ſubjects, without which they have nothing that they can call their own. Let your requiſitions be free, for reaſonable and ſubſtantial ſervices, and faithfully performed, and there is no example of a refuſal in ſuch a caſe, in any ſtate. That conſents are witheld, and ought ſo to be, in caſe of grievances unredreſſed, our own hiſtory abounds with examples. Our rights and liberties would have long ago been trampled under foot, but for that reſerved power in the Commons. But a refuſal, in a reaſonable caſe, is as yet without example. Abſurdity and caprice are not the principles which govern men, in the great concerns of ſtate; but reaſon over-rules all little caprices. In Holland, the conſent not only of the ſtates general, but of the provincial ſtates, and in many inſtances, I believe, of every town in each province, is neceſſary for great acts of ſtate; and yet that negative never ſtands in the way againſt reaſon. Where meaſures have common ſenſe, and common reaſon, for their foundation, they will never be obſtructed; where they have not, they ought to be defeated.

But it is ſaid, that we can hear of no terms with the Americans, who have been in a ſtate of reſiſtance to our authority. Sir, I wiſh to caſt no retroſpect, but only to look forward to reconciliation, and to prevent the ſhedding of blood.

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The reſolution of the noble lord has confeſſed, and the Houſe has adopted the truth of it, that requiſition is the proper way. Your colonies have been calling out to you inceſſantly, for ten years, to make your demands by conſtitutional requiſitions. This Houſe, after a ten years miſunderſtanding, has confirmed that to be, in their opinion too, the right way. Then why not cloſe now at leaſt upon that ground, without retroſpect. The colonies have been driven to reſiſtance againſt their wills, leſt they ſhould have nothing that they could ſurely call their own. The right to take any nation's money indefinitely, without their conſent, without meaſure, without account, without any enquiry into the application, is not to be conceded or compromiſed by any nation upon the earth. Reſiſtance or ruin muſt infallibly be the conſequence; and thoſe who are compelled to reſiſtance, by your having perſevered in the principle of taking by force, till the noble lord's propoſition, which has at laſt condemned it, have been forced to deny that authority, which they always had, and always would have wiſhed to acknowledge and ſupport. It was that unconquerable and irreſiſtible impulſe of nature, ſelf-defence, which cut off all retreat: then let us caſt no retroſpect. If the grounds of this unhappy diſpute can be ſettled, all may be peace yet. If the Americans could be aſſured, that you would not again make reſiſtance abſolutely neceſſary to their ſecurity and very being as a people, they are ready enough to acknowledge their ſubordination, and all the rights of Great Britain. Let them know, that peace and ſecurity to their rights and properties ſhall be the certain condition of acknowledging the ſupreme legiſlation of this country, and the matter is ended.

Sir, after I ſhall have received the determination of the Houſe upon the motion for requiſitions, I ſhall take the liberty to offer three other motions, for a ſuſpenſion of the three vindictive American bills of the laſt ſeſſion. The connection of theſe motions with the preceding, is too obvious to require any explanation or debate. I would only take leave to ſay, that I ſhould not have moved for a mere ſuſpenſion of theſe bills, if a motion for their repeal had not already been rejected by this Houſe. Having given an unavailing vote for their repeal, I now come to entreat for the next degree, at leaſt for ſuſpenſion. You have excommunicated Boſton, and proſcribed the whole province of New England unheard: then recollect your juſtice, and whether you ſend even the noble lord's compulſory requiſition to America, or this motion of mine for a free requiſition; ſuſpend your

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vindictive hand, and, whilſt you treat for peace, arreſt the ſword.

Sir, I have now offered what I have to ſay upon this important ſubject. I have given it my moſt ſerious, I may ſay my only attention, ever ſince I have been in a ſituation to give a reſponſible vote upon it; and I heartily wiſh, that ſome means or other may be found in time to ſtop the effuſion of civil blood. And here, Sir, I offer my poor ſentiments to the Houſe, and to the noble lord, as in the place of miniſter. It is a great reſponſibility that will lie at his door, who is to have the recommendation, I might ſay the deciſion, of the meaſures to be adopted. We on this ſide the Houſe, who have oppoſed the whole ſyſtem of American meaſures, have not done it merely for the ſake of oppoſition. We have not ſheltered ourſelves under—No, no.——But we have declared our principles, we have offered our plans; and they muſt now remain with Great Britain and America at large, to diſcuſs and weigh their merits, to accept or to reject them. The noble lord has a great aſcendent in this Houſe. Perhaps his plan, if he has any thing to be called a plan, may find advocates and voices here. But our country at large, Great Britain and America, muſt finally decide. My honourable friend near me [Mr. Burke] has, with unrivalled ability, opened to you his principles and plan. The Earl of Chatham has, in the other Houſe, offered his proviſional bill for conciliation, to the miniſtry there: and for myſelf, Sir, it is with the greateſt deference and humility that I preſume to offer any thing of mine, in conjunction with ſuch great names and abilities. I can only plead the ſincerity of my intentions, as an apology for my preſumption. All our plans tend to one centre, and to one point of reconciliation, to ſave the effuſion of blood between thoſe who ought to be reciprocally good and uſeful friends. If the noble lord has any ſecret feelings of relenting, as many of his friends, and many more who would be his friends, moſt ſincerely wiſh, let him ſtand out, and do juſtice to his own feelings. His country calls upon him, not to give way to ſanguinary and impatient councils, contrary to his own better judgment. This is the deciſive hour; the fate of Great Britain and America are depending.

The eyes of all this country, and America too, are turned towards the noble lord, as the oſtenſible and reſponſible miniſter, to receive his final determination, as to the meaſures which are to decide the ſafety or ruin of this empire. The ways of peace are ſtill before him. If war is to be the meaſure with America, let him conſider, that it is not a majority of this

Houſe that can conquer America. The ſupport of reaſon and juſtice to his meaſures will ſtand him better in ſtead, than the noiſy tumult of a majority; in which majority, there may be lurking treacherous counſellors, and pretended friends, ſecretly urging him to his ruin, even againſt his own judgment. The important reſponſibility is out of meaſure. When the debates and meaſures of this year are tranſmitted to America, they may, perhaps, tell the noble lord, Had you purſued a plan of equity and juſtice, all had been peace. At home, one plan of conciliation has already been propoſed, for which the city of London, foreſeeing the certain ruin of other meaſures, has given thanks to its great and noble author, as an earneſt for the reſt of the kingdom. If Great Britain and America ſhould come to one mind of peace, they may unite to cruſh thoſe men who keep them aſunder.

He moved, That an humble addreſs be preſented to his Majeſty, that he will be graciouſly pleaſed to give orders, that letters of requiſition be written to the ſeveral provinces of his Majeſty's colonies and plantations in America, to make proviſion for the purpoſes of defending, protecting and ſecuring the ſaid colonies and plantations; and that his Majeſty will be pleaſed to order all ſuch addreſſes as he ſhall receive, in anſwer to the aforeſaid letters of requiſition, to be laid before this Houſe.

He alſo moved, 1. That leave be given to bring in a bill to ſuſpend, for the term of three years, the force and execution of an act, paſſed in the laſt ſeſſion of Parliament, entitled, "An Act to diſcontinue, in ſuch manner and for ſuch time as are therein mentioned, the landing and diſcharging, lading or ſhipping of goods, wares or merchandize, at the town and within the harbour of Boſton, in the province of Maſſachuſet's Bay, in New England."

It paſſed in the negative.

2. That leave be given to bring in a bill to ſuſpend, for the term of two years, an act paſſed in the laſt ſeſſion of Parliament, entitled, "An act for the impartial adminiſtration of juſtice, in the caſes of perſons queſtioned for any acts done by them, in the execution of the law; or, for the ſuppreſſion of riots or tumults in the province of Maſſachuſets Bay, in New England."

It paſſed in the negative.

3. That leave be given to bring in a bill to ſuſpend, for the term of three years, an act paſſed in the laſt ſeſſion of Parliament, entitled, "An act for the better regulating the government of the province of Maſſachuſets Bay, in New England."

It paſſed in the negative.

FINIS.

V.D.